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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1825
INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 4114
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 9856
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 4715
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA IMMEDIATE 9822
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 4460
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 2700
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 0949
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MCAP](#) [PINR](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF TO RETIRE

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Larry Schwartz, Reasons, 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) Defense Secretary Bishnu Datta Uprety told A/DCM Shelton June 13 that Chief of Army Staff General Pyar Jung Thapa will take official leave starting August 9 and retire from duty as scheduled on September 9. Uprety said that although other rumors were swirling about as to Thapa's successor, it will "most likely" be General Thapa's second in command, Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Rookmangud Katawal.

Comment

¶2. (C) Uprety's confirmation that General Thapa will retire this summer puts to rest other rumors that he might stay on. While Uprety admitted he does not know "exactly" that Katawal would be the next Chief, he indicated a high probability that he would be. Although Katawal has close links with the Palace, he does not come from one of the families that have traditionally dominated the Nepalese Army (e.g. "Thapa" or "Rana"). At the same time, his appointment would also reassure the army that the government will not interfere in the normal succession of the Chief of Army Staff.
SCHWARTZ